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main classes of persons concerned in the trade. Apart from their direct influence in increasing earnings, the minimum rates thus fixed have checked the fluctuations in piece rates and earnings which used previously to take place, and are likely somewhat to smooth out the fluctuations in output, which in the past were due partially to the absence of any minimum below which the price of labor could not be reduced. There seems to the author no reason to suppose that wages would have risen if the trade board had not been established, or that the increase in rates has tended to throw chain-makers out of work. The increase of wages has been met partly by an advance in the price paid for chain by the purchaser, partly by an improvement in the quality of the chain made, partly by a reduction in the profits of the middleman, and partly, but only to small extent, by the introduction of improved machinery. The author finds little reason to believe that the minimum rates fixed by the trade board are evaded to any serious extent.

These are distinctly favorable findings. They seem to be adequately supported by facts, and so far as they have any bearing on the case for the establishment of legal minimum wages in other industries they tend to strengthen the argument in favor of such action. The book is a model of its kind, and should be read by all who are interested in the subject of which it treats. Some of its passages have an important bearing, indeed, on general economic theory, such as that (pp. 66-71) which exposes the fallacy of the doctrine that the acuteness of industrial depression can be mitigated by an immediate reduction of wages.

A. N. HOLCOMBE.

Harvard University.

Boy Life and Labour. The Manufacture of Inefficiency. By ARNOLD FREEMAN. Preface by M. E. SADLER. (London: P. S. King and Son. 1914. Pp. xiii, 252. 3s. 6d.)

The report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws published four years ago had a far-reaching effect on what might be called the constructive side of the child-labor movement. Nothing in the report has stirred public interest more profoundly than its emphasis of the connection between uneducative juvenile work, that is, between "blind-alley" jobs, so-called, and future economic blight. It was in response to the commission's disclosures of wholesale recruiting of the ranks of unemployed and unemployable from the masses of young dead-end workers that England and Scotland or-

ganized the present system of juvenile labor exchanges with their admirable after-care committees and follow-up work.

Mr. Freeman's book is one of the fruits of the new insight into the consequences of the industrial exploitation of adolescent youth—the manufacture of inefficiency, he phrases it. The intensive study of individual cases upon which the inquiry is based was carried on in Birmingham, a city not surpassed by any other for the effective service rendered by its juvenile labor exchange volunteer workers.

With the help of the officers of these exchanges, Mr. Freeman selected for special inquiry 71 boys whose wage-work careers may be regarded as typical of the general mass of uneducative boy labor and as adequate samples of the deterioration in economic quality and prospects of the army of children whose energies are spent in unskilled and low-skill employments. The cases are analyzed with vivid detail under the headings, boys apparently destined for skilled work, for unskilled work, and for the unemployables. The first conclusion, and perhaps the most important, is that the greatest evil in the situation springs from the sacrifice to immediate wage-earning of that period of life which nature clearly has set apart for civic and vocational preparation. "We find that these precious years, instead of being used for training, are stolen for the immediate profit of industry."

The remedies suggested by Mr. Freeman are not drastic; they are designed to mitigate, if not to end, the social wastage of misemployed youth. In some degree they are already in effect in Germany and in several of our own states. Legislation is urged, in the first place, for the raising of the compulsory school-attendance age to fifteen; the work hours of employed youth should be reduced to 30 per week; and a system of continued education, social as well as industrial, in suitable day schools, should be organized for working minors under eighteen. A bibliography, almost exhaustive for the literature dealing with juvenile labor in England and Scotland, concludes Mr. Freeman's illuminating study of a vital cross-section of the human conservation problem.

MEYER BLOOMFIELD.

Vocation Bureau, Boston.

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